

[Circular letter dated Des Moines, Iowa. March 16, 1864 regarding ship canal convention, with proceeding of the preliminary meeting and circular of the convention].

Des Moines, Iowa, March 16, 1864.

To Ken Thaddeus Stevens

DEAR SIR:

At a meeting of a large and respectable number of citizens, and many of the Members of the Legislature of the State of Iowa, held at the Capitol on Saturday the 5th inst., it was unanimously resolved to invite the citizens and business men of Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and Minnesota, friendly to a SHIP CANAL, connecting the Mississippi River from some point opposite the State of Iowa with Lake Michigan, to meet in Convention at Dubuque, in said State, on the first Wednesday of May next, to deliberate upon the measure. In the opinion of the Committee of Arrangements, the subject resolves itself into the following propositions, which they take the liberty of presenting for the consideration of the Convention, to wit:

1st, To select the nearest, most practicable and least expensive route for a Ship Canal from some point opposite the State of Iowa to connect with Lake Michigan; for the construction of which the people in the Upper Mississippi Valley desire and expect to receive aid from Congress.

2nd, The improvement of the Rapids of the Mississippi River in connection with the proposed Ship Canal.

You, sir, are most cordially and earnestly invited and requested to be present at said Convention, and participate in its deliberations and proceedings. The Committee would also request that you would exert your influence to secure a full delegation to said Convention from your County, provided you are a resident of either of the above named States.

Yours truly,

Committee of Arrangements.

W. I. GILCHRIST, McGregor,

L. A. THOMAS, Dubuque,

J. G. PATTERSON, Charles City, Floyd Co.,

G. MAGILL, Lyons,

W. F. H. GURLEY, Davenport,

L. COOK, Burlington,

D. W. KILBOURNE, Keokuk.

(PROCEEDINGS OF THE PRELIMINARY MEETING HELD AT THE CAPITOL OF IOWA ON THE 5TH INST.) SHIP CANAL MEETING.

A meeting of a number of the citizens of Iowa, members of the Legislature and others, was held at the Supreme Court Room of the Capital, at Des Moines, on Saturday evening, March 5th, 1864, for the purpose of conferring in relation to the matter of connecting the water of the Lakes and the Mississippi River, by means of a Ship Canal.

The object of the meeting having been stated, on motion, the Hon. B. B. RICHARDS of Dubuque, was called to the chair, and Dr. T. J. Saunders, of Scott, was appointed Secretary.

After a free interchange of sentiment, in which a number of gentlemen participated, the following preamble and resolutions offered by Mr. Thomas, of Dubuque, were on motion of Lt. Governor Eastman, unanimously adopted:

Whereas , The question is now being agitated of the construction of a Ship Canal from the Eastern border of Iowa to the Lakes: therefore,

Resolved , That a committee of arrangements consisting of seven persons, of whom the Hon. Wm. I. Gilchrist, of McGregor, shall be chairman, be appointed to take such measures as may be deemed necessary for calling a convention of the business men of Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and Minnesota, who are friendly to such an enterprise, at an early day, to deliberate upon the measure and to present its claims and advantages to the consideration of Congress and the country.

Resolved , That in the opinion of this meeting such convention should be called to meet as early as the first Wednesday of May next, at Dubuque, in the State of Iowa.

Resolved , That said committee be instructed to invite the Senators in Congress of Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota, and such of the Representatives of those States as from their location may be supposed to be friends to the measure, to meet with the people in such convention and to participate in the deliberations and proceedings thereof.

Resolved , That the newspapers in the above named States, friendly to the proposed Ship Canal, be requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting, and also to urge the people in their respective localities, to send delegates to said convention.

Resolved , That Steamboats and Railroads be respectfully requested to carry delegates to and from said convention at half fare rates.

In accordance with the requirements of the first resolution, the meeting then appointed the remaining members of the committee of arrangements, as follows: S. G. Magill, of Lyons; W. H. F. Gurley, of Davenport; J. G. Patterson, of Charles City; L. A. Thomas, of Dubuque; D. W. Kilbourne, of Keokuk, and Lyman Cook of Burlington.

On motion, it was

Resolved , That the committee of arrangements be instructed to correspond with citizens of other States, favorable to the measure, and to invite their co-operation.

On motion, it was

Resolved , That the newspapers of Des Moines be requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting and to call the attention of the press at large thereto.

B. B. RICHARDS, Chairman .

T. J. Saunders , Secretary.

Note .—All communications addressed to L. A. Thomas , Secretary, Dubuque, Iowa.

CIRCULAR.

NORTH-WESTERN SHIP CANAL CONVENTION.

Shippers, Forwarding and Commission Merchants, Business men and citizens generally of the Upper Mississippi Valley, residing in the States of Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and Minnesota, friendly to the enterprise of connecting the waters of the Mississippi River and Lake Michigan by means of a *Ship Canal*, are requested to take immediate measures for the appointment of Delegates to attend the *Ship Canal Convention*, to be held at Dubuque, Iowa, on the first Wednesday of May next. Each County will be entitled to four Delegates, with one additional Delegate for every five thousand inhabitants. Incorporated Towns and Cities will be entitled to the same ratio of Delegates. Provisions should be made for casting the full vote of the County, Town or City.

State officers and members of Congress and of the Legislature of the above named States, will be ex-officio members of said Convention. Editors of newspapers in said States, and such other persons as shall receive this Circular, are also invited to seats in said Convention.

It is unnecessary for the Committee to enlarge upon the vast importance of this great National enterprise. With its completion, the entire product of the Mississippi Valley will be enhanced in value at least twenty per cent. Their transportation to Buffalo will be as expeditious and quite as cheap as from Chicago, thereby saving to the farmer and producer the expense of Rail Road transportation to that or other Lake Ports.

The question of such *Ship Canal* is now being discussed both before the country and in Congress, and the probability is that some course of policy in relation thereto will be adopted at the present session. Let us therefore be awake to this great National measure. Let every County, Town and City throughout the entire North-West be represented in the proposed Convention. We have already slept too long over our most material and vital interests. Let us do so no longer; now is the time to move. Next year, or even after the adjournment of the present session of Congress, may be too late. In such an event, others may reap a harvest that legitimately belongs to us, and which may now be gathered. Efforts will be made by the Committee to secure from Steam Boats and Rail Roads, tickets to and from the Convention at half-fare rates. If successful, timely notice will be given through the Dubuque papers.

By order of the Committee of Arrangements.

WM. I. GILCHRIST, Chairman.

•Newspapers throughout the West are requested to publish the above with editorial.

19-42b

Ship Cana l

19/42b